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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THOREAU'S TREATMENT OF THE SEASONS

by

Elizabeth Stephan

(A. B., Boston University, 1926)

Submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of

Master of Arts

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THOREAU'S TREATMENT OF THE SEASONS

Outline

A. INTRODUCTION.

1. How his environment fostered his interest in changes of the seasons.
2. His love for Concord and its environs
3. How Concord fulfilled his requirements

B. HIS RELATION TO THE SEASONS

1. His Journal as a book of the seasons
2. Treatment of the Journal by H. G. O. Blake
3. His friendship with the seasons
4. How the seasons affect man and his thoughts
5. Health and the seasons

C. WINTER

1. As a poem
2. "Solid beauty" of winter
3. Winter pictures
4. Mornings of creation
5. Colors of winter
6. Winter sounds
7. Value of ice and snow
8. Inwardness of the season
9. Significance of January thaws
10. Season of man's harvest

D. SPRING

1. Season of hope and promise
2. Evidences of spring's approach
3. Signs of the arrival of spring
4. A spring morning
5. A spring evening
6. Rain
7. Spring sounds
8. Spring thoughts

THE HISTORY OF THE

1790

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E. SUMMER

1. A season of growth
2. Characteristics
3. Fragrance of summer
4. Knowledge of flowers
5. Value of trees
6. Acquaintance with birds
7. Significant summer sounds
8. Habits of nature's children
9. Summer thoughts

F. AUTUMN

1. The poet's view of autumn
2. The brilliancy of the season
3. Autumnal tints
4. Exhilaration created by lavish display
5. Source of nature's paintbox
6. Color, the symbol of ripeness
7. Philosopher's thoughts concerning ripeness
8. Period of maturity and harvest
9. Significance of fall of the leaf
10. November, the month of decay
11. Tragedy of autumn
12. The "thoughtful days" for the philosopher
13. Autumn a second spring

G. CONCLUSION

1. Familiarity with the seasons
2. Interest centered in wild nature
3. Underlying purpose of each season
4. Corresponding seasons in the life of man

H. SUMMARY

I. BIBLIOGRAPHY

THOREAU'S TREATMENT OF THE SEASONS

A. INTRODUCTION.

1. How his environment fostered his interest in changes of the seasons.

"The busy city or the heated car,
The unthinking crowd, the depot's deafening jar,
These me befit not, but the snow-clad hill
From whose white steeps the rushing torrents fill
Their pebbly beds, and as I look content
At the red Farmhouse to the summer lent,
There underneath that hospitable elm,
The broad ancestral tree, that is the helm
To sheltered hearts,- not idly ask in vain,
Why was I born -- the heritage of pain?"¹

What more fitting place for the birth of the poet than the old New England farmhouse, set in the midst of deserted pathways, orchards, mossy banks, and crumbling walls! In this ancestral home in Concord, Massachusetts, Henry David Thoreau drew his first breath in the clear, pure country air, and for the greater part of his life, he was a resident there. For several years during his very early life, the family lived in Chelmsford and Boston. The return to Concord, which took place when Thoreau was about four years old, marks the beginning of his life-long association with his birthplace.

The father was a quiet, plodding, busy man, who gave to his son the serious, thoughtful aspect of his nature. From his mother, the boy probably inherited the wild streak in his character and his sincere, whole-hearted devotion to nature. She

1. Channing, William E., Thoreau the Poet-Naturalist, p. 14

was of Celtic origin, had a nimble tongue, a quick wit, and a vivacious spirit. Wrote Thoreau in his Journal,

"I sometimes think that I must go off to some wilderness where I can have a better opportunity to play life,-- can find more suitable materials to build my house with, and enjoy the pleasure of collecting my fuel in the forest. I have more taste for the wild sports of hunting, fishing, wigwam-building, making garments of skins, and collecting wood wherever you find it, than for butchering, farming, carpentering, working in a factory, or going to a wood market. It is vain to dream of a wildness distant from ourselves. There is none such. I shall never find in the wilds of Labrador any greater wildness than in some recess in Concord, i. e., than I import into it. A little more manhood or virtue will make the surface of the globe anywhere thrillingly novel and wild." ¹

In his early youth, he became inured to the hardy life of the out-of-doors. He went barefoot, like the other lads in the community. When he was six years of age, he drove the cattle to pasture early in the morning and brought them home at sundown. At the age of ten, he shouldered a fowling piece, and acquired skill in the use of his fishing rod. He wandered through the woods and fields of the town. He became acquainted with the wild life of Concord. By him the first flowers of the season, the growing, expanding trees, the near and distant hills, were noted and beloved. The rocks and sounding places in the waters of the town were all familiar to him. His keen interest in the Redman and his life in nature took root in his early youth, when he visited the Indians on their trips into the

1. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journals, edited by Odell Shepard, p. 220

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town to sell their wares, grew in his manhood and stayed with him as long as he lived. His last sentence contained two distinct words, "moose" and "Indian".

The close intimacy he established with nature in these early years of his life never deserted him. During his years at Harvard, he did not abandon his open-air pursuits, and his fondness for the phenomena of nature made him a diligent student of natural history. His devotion to nature and to the Indian, both born in his early youth, aroused his reverence no less than the classics.

Of the several important events of his early manhood, one was undoubtedly his journey with his brother, John, to the White Mountains. The excursion was made partly by boat, and partly on foot.

The next important event was the building of a small hut at Walden, which resulted from an economic forethought. Through the book, Walden, in which he has described his life in nature, there reigns a calm, serene, undisturbed spirit. The rain and snow may come, the winds blow, the heat stifle and the cold chill, but the rain does not wet, nor the cold penetrate, Thoreau's retreat. "The Maine Woods" and "Cape Cod" are products of two of the few trips of any length that Thoreau took during his lifetime.

2. His love for Concord and its environs.

He had a peculiar interest in Concord, and seldom left it. One of his biographers tells us that he had "a genius for staying

at home."¹ Thoreau himself wrote,

"I have been a good deal of a traveler about my native village."²

From 1826 until the day of his death in 1862, he did not leave town except upon long walking excursions, for short visits, or to lecture. Travel, he believed, is not required in order to attain knowledge.

"Yet these men had no need to travel to be as wise as Solomon in all his glory, so similar are the lives of men in all countries, and fraught with the same homely experiences. One half the world knows how the other half lives."³

"If with fancy unfurled
You leave your abode,
You may go round the world
On the old Marlborough Road."⁴

He had no love for great cities; Rome, Athens, Paris, and London held no charm for him who believed

"..... heroes, paladins, and fairy queens as native to the shores of the Musketaquid as to those of any classic or poetic stream."⁵

3. How Concord fulfilled his requirements.

What better place than Concord could be offered for his highly individualized interests! His Transcendental belief with its idealistic tendencies, led him away from conventionalized man

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1. Salt, Henry I., Henry David Thoreau, pp. 16-20
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Walden, p. 9
 3. "Harper's", Vol. 65, p. 632
 4. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 173
 5. Salt, Henry I., Henry David Thoreau, pp. 12-14

to nature. So he found pencil-making and school teaching futile. It is a fallacy, however, to consider him a misanthrope. His ideals were so much higher than those of ordinary man that he conceived a contemptuous attitude toward conventionalities. His concern, nevertheless, as he himself has said, was human life. No phenomenon interested him unless it lay within the experience of a human being.

"Nature must be viewed humanly to be viewed at all; that is, her scenes must be associated with humane affections, such as are associated with one's native place, for instance. She is most significant to a lover. A lover of Nature is pre-eminently a lover of man. If I have no friend, what is Nature to me? She ceases to be morally significant." ¹

Again he says,

"What is Nature unless there is an eventful human life passing within her?"²

He turned to nature and in her he sought the truth, and its relation to mankind. He undertook the study of wild life in an attempt to discover in nature the perfect life. He became a professional walker or saunterer. It was his business to watch sunrise and sunset, to inspect winds, rains, snows, and storms, to wrest from Nature the key to her mysteries; to live in the out-of-doors; to seek truth in external nature. Concord offered him wild nature in all her various forms; he had no need to go beyond

1. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 139
2. "Current Literature", Vol. 39, p. 597

her borders.

Concord was a typical New England village. The inhabitants were, for the most part, farmers. Nevertheless, there were many uncultivated acres of land. The landscape was varied, consisting of fields, meadows, swamps, bogs, hills, and vales, lakes, rivers, and woodlands. The waters, composed of the Assabet and the Musketaquid Rivers, and the ponds, Walden, Sandy, White and Bateman; the woods of pine, oak, chestnut and maple, still retaining their primeval severity; the hills of Anursack, Nashawtuck, Ball and Brister, with glimpses of Monadnock and Wachusett, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire; uncultivated meadows, swamps, and bogs; the wildness of the Marlborough Road and the Estabrook country were all of inexhaustible value to the true nature lover.

In his walks, Thoreau became familiar with the wild life of his birthplace. He loved the woods, fields and hills, the streams, wild creatures and flowers. Living wild things were the objects of his study. The rose he left on the bush, and the fish in the stream. He was not a collector, but a student of wild life. His interest in swamps and bogs was due to their wild, uncultivated expanse. The woods of Walden, and the old Marlborough Road were unimproved stretches of territory which, in their primitive state, thrilled him. Since his keenest interest was in wild nature, he, of necessity, made a detailed observation of the seasons, for wild nature is ruled exclusively by the changing seasons. He carried no gun, trap

nor net. Emerson said of him,

"It was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with him. He knew the country like a fox or a bird, and he passed through it as freely by paths of his own. He knew every track in the snow or on the ground, and what creature had taken this path before him."¹

1. Emerson, Ralph Waldo, American Poetry and Prose, p. 441

B. HIS RELATION TO THE SEASONS.

1. His Journal as a book of the seasons.

Thoreau was a man of many trades, but he chose to work chiefly in the field of literature. Of his literary works, two, Walden and A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers were published during his life-time. The inheritors and editors of his manuscripts prepared Excursions and Cape Cod for publication. Among his works there is no complete book of the seasons. Evidently, however, Thoreau contemplated such a work for he wrote these words in his diary.

"A book of the seasons, each passage of which should be written in its own season and out-of-doors, in its own locality, wherever it may be."¹

The nearest approach to such a volume is his Journal, a diary in which he recorded over a period of years, his observations and reflections. During the day or night, in summer and in winter, in autumn and in spring, in rain or in sunshine, in intense heat or bitter cold, he eagerly explored all kinds of paths, talking and musing as he went forward or retraced his steps. He always brought back from his travels some new treasure for his rapidly growing, voluminous Journal. Many of the observations were written in the open air, thus bringing the reader into close contact with nature, and showing a genuine love for nature, and an exactitude and minuteness of details.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 99

"May 1, 1852, Five A.M. To Cliffs. A smart frost in the night. The ploughed ground and the platforms white with it. I hear the little forked-tail chipping sparrows shaking out his rapid 'tchi-tchi-tchi-tchi-tchi-tchi', - a little jingle from the oak behind the depot." ¹

Speaking of peeping frogs, he gives a minute and careful description of some he has in his possession.

"Mine are about three fourths of an inch long as they sit, seven eighths if stretched, four fingered and five toed, with small tubercles on the ends of them. ... Jump eighteen inches or more. When they peep, the loose, wrinkled skin of the throat is swelled up into a globular bubble, very large and transparent, and quite round, except on the throat side, behind which their little heads are lost, mere protuberances on the side of this sphere." ¹

2. Treatment of Journal by H. G. O. Blake.

To H. G. O. Blake, Sophie Thoreau bequeathed her brother's Journal. To picture the progress of the seasons in the Thoreau year, Blake attempted to bring together the passages written on the same day of the month in different years. The result is such as Thoreau himself probably planned. The editor has entitled these volumes, Early Spring in Massachusetts, Summer, Autumn, and Winter.

In his introduction to the volume Summer, the editor wrote,

"Had his life continued, very likely he would have produced some such work from the materials and suggestions contained in his Journal, and this

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 96

would have been doubtless far more complete and beautiful than anything we can now construct from fragmentary passages."¹

3. His true friendship with the seasons.

"While I enjoy the friendship of the seasons, I trust that nothing can make life a burden to me."²

"If there were no other vicissitudes than the seasons, our interest would never tire."³

Thus Henry David Thoreau gives us the keynote to his relationship with the seasons. Each season, in its proper sequence, was his friend; he knew and loved each one. One of his chief delights, as the reader soon learns, was to note the departure of one season and the approach of another; to discover in one season the traces of a phenomenon of the preceding or succeeding season; to observe the changes produced by the different seasons.

"Some less obvious and commonly unobserved signs of the progress of the seasons interest me most, like the loose dangling catkins of the hophornbeam, or of the black and yellow birch, The birds of the *Populus tremuloides* show their down as in early spring, and the early willows. I think that this sparkle without redness, a cold glitter is peculiar to this season....." ⁴

".....By the twentieth of August, everywhere in woods and swamps we are reminded of the fall, both by the

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, Introduction, p. 6
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Walden, p. 205
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 72
 4. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 354

richly spotted Sarsaparilla leaves and Brakes, and the withering and blackened skunk-cabbage and Hellebore, and, by the riverside, the already blackening Pontederia."¹

The effect of this constant change in seasons on nature is marked. With an ever-revolving motion, the seasons contrive not only to variegate the phenomena of nature, but to preclude any possibility of the hardening of any part of nature; or gathering of waste and dirt by her own process of cleansing and purifying.

"Nowhere does any rigidity grow upon nature, no muscles harden, no bones protrude, but she is supple-jointed now and always. No rubbish accumulates from day to day, but still does freshness predominate on her cheek and cleanliness in her attic. The dust settles on the fences and the rocks and the pastures by the roadside, but still the sward is just as green, may greener, for all that. The morning air is clear, even at this day. It is not begrimed with all the dust that has been raised. The dew makes all clean again."²

To him, nature in her season, is in deepest sympathy with mankind, intends no harm and does no damage.

"The indescribable innocence and beneficence of Nature,-- of sun and wind and rain, of summer and winter,-- much health, such cheer, they afford forever! and such sympathy have they ever with our race, that all Nature would be affected, and the sun's brightness fade, and the winds would sigh humanely, and the clouds rain tears, and the woods shed their leaves and put on mourning in mid-summer if any man should ever for a just cause grieve."³

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 218

2. Ibid., p. 74

3. Thoreau, Henry D., Walden, p. 217

After studying nature and her seasonal changes meticulously and thoroughly for a long time, the rapidly moving phenomena became very familiar to him. In fact, so well known did they become to him, that they seemed to be a part of him.

"The seasons and all their changes are in me.... These regular phenomena of the season get at last to be simply and plainly phenomena or phases of my life.... Almost I believe that the Concord River would not rise and overflow its banks again were I not here..... After awhile, I learn what my moods and seasons are. I would have nothing subtracted, I can imagine nothing added."¹

4. How the seasons affect man.

According to Thoreau, the seasons were made for man. Each season plays its part in the development and improvement of mankind.

"The winter was made to concentrate and harden and mature the kernel of his brain, to give tone and firmness and consistency to his thought. Then is the great harvest of the year, the harvest of thought. All previous harvests are stubble to this, mere fodder and green crop."²

The seasons of a man's life he considered as similar to those in nature. The spring and summer, the youth and early manhood, are but the seasons of growth and maturing, leading, as in nature, to the ripeness and maturity of winter.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 157

2. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 190

"Do you not feel the fruit of your spring and summer beginning to ripen, to harden its seed within you? Do not your thoughts begin to acquire consistency as well as flavor and ripeness? How can we expect a harvest of thought who have not had a seed time of character? Already some of my small thoughts--fruits of my spring life are ripe, like the berries which feed the first broods of birds; and some others are prematurely ripe and bright like the lower leaves of the herbs which have felt the summer's draught." ¹

To the philosopher the rapid flight of the seasons was related to our varied moods. Each experience in nature he reduced to a mood of man's mind.

"Each season is an infinitesimal point. It no sooner comes than it is gone. It has no duration. It simply gives a tone and hue to my thoughts. Each annual phenomenon is a reminiscence and prompting. Our thoughts and sentiments answer to the revolutions of the seasons, as two cog-wheels fit into each other. We are conversant with only one point of contact at a time, from which we receive a prompting and impulse and instantly pass to a new season or point of contact. A year is made up of a certain series and number of sensations and thoughts which have their language in nature." ²

Further, the reminiscence of any season means more to man than the actual event and the season in which it took place.

"It is surprising how any reminiscence of a different season of the year affects us. When I meet with any such in my journal, it affects me as poetry, and I appreciate that other season and particular phenomenon more than at the time. The world so seen is all one spring, and full of beauty. You only need to make a faithful record

1. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 20

2. Ibid., p. 274

of an average summer day's experience and summer mood, and read it in the winter, and it will carry you back to more than that summer day alone could show. Only the rarest flower, the purest melody of the season thus comes down to us."¹

5. Health and the seasons.

"Why, nature is but another name for health, and the seasons are different states of health."²

Thoreau thus states another relationship between man and nature.

Nature is health-giving, each season being a panacea for all ills.

"Live in each season as it passes, breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influences of each..... Make them your diet, drink, medicine.... Be blown on by all winds. Bathe in all Nature's tides at all seasons.... Grow green with spring, yellow and ripe with autumn.... Drink of each season's influences as a vial, a true panacea of all remedies mixed for your special use.... Let Nature do your battling, pickling and preserving. For all Nature is doing her best each moment to make us well. She exists for no other end. Do not resist her."²

"It is a mistake to say that one is not well in a certain season. Some men say they are not well and strong in summer, some in winter."³

Thoreau believed that it is not true that such people aren't well in a season, but that "they are not well in them."

"To the sick, indeed, nature is sick, but to the well, a fountain of health."⁴

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 154
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Journal, Vol. 1, p. 179
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 180
 4. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 82

Health is found in nature and not in society. Society, when unaided by nature, produces a pale and wan-countenanced man. Man, to be truly well, must stand in the midst of nature.

"Society is always diseased, and the best the most so. There is no scent in it so wholesome as that of the pines, nor any fragrance so penetrating and restorative as the life-everlasting in high pastures."¹

Nature's health is not the privilege of a chosen few, or of him only who can afford to pay. It is the priceless possession of all who take it, and it is free. No man is excluded, unless he excludes himself. The seasons, with their sun, winds, rains, cold and heat, are the health producing gifts of nature to man.

"If I were a physician, I would try my patients thus. I would wheel them to a window and let Nature feel their pulses,"²

wrote Thoreau.

Even reading in one season about the phenomena of another, bringing memories of that season, has its health-creating qualities.

"I am singularly refreshed in winter when I hear of service-berries, poke-weed, juniper..... I read in Audubon with a thrill of delight, when the snow covers the ground, of the magnolia and the Florida keys, and their warm seabreezes; of the fence-rail, and the cotton-tree, and the migrations of the ice-bird; of the breaking-up on the forks of the Missouri; and we owe in accession of health to these reminiscences of luxuriant nature."³

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 39
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Journal, p. 34
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 34

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
JANUARY 1, 1954

TO THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

RE: A preliminary report on the results of the
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material received from the
National Bureau of Standards
on January 1, 1954.

The sample was received in a
sealed container and was
found to be in good condition.

The results of the analysis
are as follows:
The sample is a
solid material.

The analysis was carried out
by the method of
gravimetric analysis.
The results are as follows:
The sample is a
solid material.

Very truly yours,
[Signature]
[Name]
[Title]

C. WINTER

1. As a poem.

"When Winter fringes every bough
With his fantastic wreath,
And puts the seal of silence now
Upon the leaves beneath;

When every stream in its pent-house
Goes gurgling on its way,
And in his gallery the mouse
Nibbleth the meadow hay;

Methinks the summer still is nigh,
And lurketh underneath
As that same meadow-mouse doth lie
Snug in that last year's heath.

And if perchance the chickadee
List a faint note anon,
The snow is summer's canopy,
Which she herself put on."¹

Thus wrote Thoreau, the poet.

"The grand old poem called "Winter" is round
again without any connivance of mine."²

To Thoreau, the steady, invariable sequence of the seasons was a poem. Without any help from man, the rhythm in the progress of the seasons is continuous, summer merges into fall, fall into winter, and winter is rapidly followed by spring. This rhyme is so agreeable and musical to nature that she never tires of repeating it. Century after century it swings along with unchanging rhythm.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 125

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 395

Each part of the seasonal poem is a poem in itself, each season being distinct and individual. It is not possible, in New England, to mistake one season for another, since each possesses its own peculiar phenomena.

"Winter cannot be mistaken for summer here."¹

Winter is so satisfactory and perfect, that man will never grow weary of its wholesomeness and simplicity. In itself it is

"an epic poem, in blank verse, enriched with a million tinkling rhymes."¹

2. Its beauty.

Winter is "solid beauty".² Autumn has its richly painted leaves, summer its vivid, living green, spring its earthy brown, but winter is a gem, a pure, white, sparkling crystal jewel of snow and ice. Nature, in this season, decks herself in glittering and dazzling garments. In fact, a winter in New England, without its coating of "solid beauty", would be a desolate and dreary sight. It would seem to be but an "unburied summer."³

"Today the trees are white with snow, ---
I mean their stems and branches have
the true wintry look on the storm side.
Not till this has true winter come to the
forest."³

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 256
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 395
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 243

The softly falling snow soon obliterates all traces of man with very little effort. It covers everything with a blanket as soft as down or cotton.

3. Pictures of winter.

"We see the roofs stand under their snow burden. From the eaves and fences hang stalactites of snow, and in the yard stand stalactites covering some concealed core. The trees and shrubs rear white arms to the sky on every side; and where were walls and fences, we see fantastic forms stretching in frolic gambols across the dusky landscape, as if Nature had strewn her fresh designs over the fields by night as models for man's art."¹

"It looks like the small frost-work in the path, and on the windows now, especially the oak woods at a distance, and you see better the form which the branches take. That is a picture of winter; and now you may put a cottage under the trees and roof it with snow-drifts, and let the smoke curl up amid the boughs in the morning."²

"First in the dusky dawn he sends abroad
His early scent, his emissary, smoke,
The earliest, latest pilgrim from the roof,
To feel the frosty air, inform the day."³

The morning is the most favorable time to behold the glittering, gorgeous gems of nature.

"The winter morning is the time to see in perfection the woods and shrubs wearing their snowy and frosty dress."⁴

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions and Poems, p. 241
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 117
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 113
 4. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 443

It is then that winter, jewelled Nature, displays the wonder of myriads of crystal ornaments.

"Every leaf and twig was this morning covered with a sparkling ice armor; even the grasses in the exposed fields, were hung with innumerable diamond pendants, which jingled merrily when brushed by the foot of the travellers. It was literally the wreck of jewels and the crash of gems."¹

"It is surprising what a variety of distinct colors the winter can show us, using but a few pigments."²

4. Mornings of creation.

"These are true mornings of creation, original and poetic days, not vague repetitions of the past. There is no lingering of yesterday's fogs, only such a mist as might have adorned the first morning."³

In the splendor of a brilliant, clear morning of winter, Thoreau found joy and inspiration. There are ordinary, pleasant mornings

"when you find the river firmly frozen in the night, but still the air is serene and the sun falls gratefully warm an hour after sunrise."⁴

Such invigorating wintry days are common enough in New England.

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 225
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 386
 3. Ibid., p. 137
 4. Ibid., p. 129

Unusual, however, both in summer and winter are mornings called by Thoreau "mornings of creation". On such mornings, the world seems to have been created anew; there is nothing left of the disappointments and wonderings of the previous day. We look, not backward, but forward into the light of today and tomorrow.

"There are from time to time mornings, both in summer and winter, when especially the world seems to begin anew, beyond which meaning need not go, for not behind them is yesterday and our past life, when as in the morning of a frost there are visible the effects of a certain creative energy. The world has visibly been recreated in the night. Mornings of creation, I call them. In the midst of these marks of a creative energy recently active, while the sun is rising with more than the usual splendor, I look back for the ear of this creation not into the night, but to a dawn for which no man ever rose early enough,-- a morning which carries us back beyond the Mosaic creation, where crystallizations are fresh and unmelted. It is the poet's hour. Mornings when men are new born, men who have the seed of life in them. It should be a part of my religion to be abroad then."¹

5. Colors of winter.

The solid beauty of winter aids in the creation of other glories of the season.

"Great winter itself looked like a precious gem reflecting rainbow colors from one angle."²

The colors of winter are not merely the cool white of the snow and the chilling crystal of ice, but the colors reflected in the ice

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 258

2. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 225

and on the snow by the slanting rays of the sun are rainbow-hued.

"The old ice is covered with a dry, powdery snow about an inch deep, from which as I walk toward the sun, this perfectly clear bright afternoon at half-past three o'clock, the colors of the rainbow are reflected from a myriad of tiny facets. It is as if the dust of diamonds and other precious gems were spread all around. The blue and red predominate!"¹

Very few people are aware of the double phenomena of the sunset when snow and ice cover the ground. One is on the earth, the other in the sky and on the horizon.

"The tints of the sunset are never purer and more ethereal than in the cold wintry days. This evening, though the colors are not brilliant, the sky is crystalline, and the pale, fawn-tinged clouds are very beautiful..... Once or twice of late, I have seen the mother-of-pearl tints and rainbow flecks in the western sky. The usual time is when the air is clear and pretty cool about an hour before sunset. Yesterday, I saw a very permanent specimen like a long knife handle of mother-of-pearl, very pale with an interior blue, and rosaceous tinges. I think the summer sky never exhibits this so finely."²

Thoreau thus vividly describes the unusual colors of the winter sunset and the reflection of the colors in the sky and on the snow-covered earth. Each sunset disclosed to him some new phenomenon of color, some newly painted picture or an unfamiliar view. Peculiar to winter sunsets is the strange

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 383
2. Ibid., p. 100

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pinkish glow which so distinctly colors not only the sky but the snow-clad hills and valleys, and the icy trees and ponds and rivers.

"This is one of the phenomena of the winter sunset, this distinct pink light reflected from the brows of the snow-clad hills on one side of you, as you are facing the sun..... I begin to see a pink light reflected from the snow there about fifteen minutes before the sun sets. This gradually deepens to purple and violet in some places, and the pink is very distinct, especially when after looking at the simply white snow on other sides, you turn your eyes to the hills."¹

6. Winter sounds.

In the early days of winter, the dry, sharp rustle of the withered leaves is the voice of the woods. If these leaves did not linger, the stillness of the woods would be far more dreary. The sounds are much like the roar of the sea, and suggests that the land is the

"....seacoast to the aerial ocean..... Just as the inhabitants of Cape Cod hear the surf ever breaking on its shores, so we countrymen hear this kindred surf on the leaves of the forest."²

"All the elements strive to naturalize the sound."³

The very stroke of the axe as it fells the tree, so kindly and gently echoes through the woods, that it merges with, and becomes, apparently, one with nature. In so much does the sound blend

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 156

2. Ibid., p. 102

3. Ibid., p. 218

with nature that it adds a definite charm to a walk, if the strokes are seldom and few. Nature, then, seems to overlook the profane action of many by gently softening the harsh, crude blows. The sound is as melodious as in spring, due, probably, to a certain resonance and elasticity in the air.

At other times in the winter,

"The rough of the breeze in the pine tops sounds far away like the surf on a distant shore, and for all sounds besides there is only the rattling or chafing of little dry twigs, perchance a little snow falling on them, or they are so brittle that they break and fall with the motion of the trees."¹

"They are Infernal sounds only that you hear, the crowing of the cocks, the bark of dogs, the chopping of wood, the lowing of kine, all seem to come from Pluto's barnyard and beyond the Styx,-- not for any melancholy they suggest, but their twilight bustle is too solemn and mysterious for earth."²

The stillness of the winter day is very impressive.

Mid-winter is the sabbath of the year,

"The wonderful stillness of a winter day."³

This stillness is not like the silence of any other season. The source of all sound is apparently frozen into complete and absolute silence. The only sound to be heard in nature is the crackling of the ice, as if it were struggling for speech. Aside

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 322

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions and Poems, p. 164

3. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 385

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from this inarticulate sound in nature,

"we hear only that sound of the surf of our internal sea rising and swelling in our ears as in two sea-shells."¹

At times, so great is the silence that it can be heard.

"As I walk the railroad causeway, I am disturbed by the sound of my steps on the frozen ground. I wish to hear the silence of the night. I cannot walk with my ears covered, for the silence is something positive and to be heard..... The silence sings. It is musical."²

Even the creaking of a wagon on the snow in a frosty night created, to Thoreau's ears, music, which in his own words allied it "to the highest and purest strain of the muses."

When the temperature is high and the weather fair, there is a peculiar quality of the air which makes sound clearer and more pervading than at any other time. Sound, far from reaching the ear abruptly and piercingly, travels sweetly and musically. It is as if it had more confidence and dared to trust itself farther abroad than at any other season of the year.

7. Value of ice and snow.

"Winter comes to make walking possible where there is no walking in summer."³

Thoreau considered each season not only as a necessity in nature's

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 385

2. Ibid., p. 217

3. Ibid., p. 284

Section 101 of the Constitution

Section 101 of the Constitution provides that the President shall be elected for a term of four years, and shall be eligible for re-election only once.

Section 102 of the Constitution provides that the President shall be elected by the electors in each State.

Section 103 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

Section 104 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senate shall concur.

Section 105 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to appoint and remove officers of the United States.

Section 106 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to commission officers of the United States.

Section 107 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to receive ambassadors and other public ministers.

Section 108 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to grant commissions and receive oaths of office.

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Section 116 of the Constitution provides that the President shall have the power to grant commissions and receive oaths of office.

scheme of things, but a boon in its own particular way, to man. So the snow and ice of winter are not evils to be corrected. Winter is as it was first designed, and beauty and usefulness are combined. The season has been subjected for millions of years to the molding hands of time, and not a single superfluous ornament remains.

Not until winter freezes the lakes, ponds and rivers can man take actual possession of all of his territory. Only at this time is it possible for the pedestrian to use the river as a highway. One, then, does not, of necessity, follow the familiar roads constructed by man, but can turn to one offering new scenes and more delightful views because they are seen only in the coldest months. Thus Thoreau wrote,

"My first true winter walk is perhaps that which I take on the river, or where I cannot go in summer. It is the walk peculiar to winter, and now first I take it."¹

When the snow lay too deep in the field to allow travel, the banks of the stream, where the snow never piled up as it did elsewhere, furnished a path for the traveler.

"The river is thus an advantage as a highway, not only in summer and when the ice is bare in winter, but even when the snow lies very deep in the fields.... Here where you cannot walk at all in summer, is better walking than elsewhere in winter."²

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 427
 2. Thoreau, H. D., Winter, p. 209

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It is in this season that one can draw near to the empire of the fish. Man glides over areas and depths in which, in summer pout and pickerel are caught, over marshes to the home of the heron; to the cabin of the muskrat, and he skates close to where the pewee and the kingfish hang their nests over the water.

"The snow hangs on the trees as the fruit of the season."¹

As the ice creates beauty and serves a purpose, so the snow is of value to man as well as to nature. Snow is the great revealer, the betrayer. Thoreau records, after a fresh fall of snow, sight of the tracks of the otter. Of this animal he would never catch a sight or see a trace, were it not for the snow. Again he wrote,

"Observe the tiny tracks of mice around every stem and the triangular track of the rabbit."²

The birds of the winter, especially the small tree sparrow, we should rarely see, if they were not etched vividly against a snowy background. The bird itself is first attracted to the weeds, because they stand out black on the white snow. Unable to find food in the woods, other birds leave their customary retreat in the forest and enter the village for sustenance. Were it not for the snows of winter, man's knowledge of the wild

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 44

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions and Poems, p. 169

life of the woods would be meager.

The snow and ice furnish a new kind of study for the botanist. One need not give over his out-door pursuits entirely, and devote himself to his books and herbarium. He may study "a new department of the vegetable physiology, what may be called crystalline botany."¹ This crystalline botany is one of the chief phenomena of winter and its ice and snow, and has no substitute in any other season.

8. Inwardness of the season.

The philosopher loved winter because it made him virtually a prisoner, compelling him to turn to new fields of interest. It called forth all his resources to provide his own entertainment. It produces an inwardness about which the poet sang:

"Packed in my mind lie all the clothes,
Which outward nature wears,
And in its fashions hourly change
It all things else repairs.

In vain I look for change abroad,
And can no difference find,
Till some new way of peace uncalled
Illumes my inmost mind."²

The farmer, snug by his winter fire, lets his thoughts travel far abroad, and thinks about his preparedness for the long winter.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions and Poems, p. 65
2. Thoreau, Henry D., Poems of Nature, p. 44

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"The full ethereal round
Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shine out intensely keen; and all one cope
Of starry glitter glows from pole to pole."¹

Being forced to use moderation in winter, made more valuable to him in summer such things as he was denied in the winter. For example, the man whose boat lies on the shore all winter, doesn't derive the thrill in the launching of the boat in the spring, which Thoreau felt when he first brought his dory from winter quarters. Abstinence during the winter made its use in spring more nearly perfect.

"It is the greatest of all advantages, to have
no advantages at all,"²

he said.

In the winter we are constantly searching for signs of summer "gone into winter quarters." To the nature lover, winter is but summer in retirement. On snow-shoes or skates, over ice and snow, man is continually pursuing and seeking signs of summer. In man's heart and at the core of nature, there is but one eternal season.

"A healthy man indeed is the complement of the
seasons, and in winter, summer is in his heart."³

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions and Poems, p. 186
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 394
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 205

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DO hereby certify that
[Name] is a citizen of the United States of America.

Given under my hand and the seal of the
Department of State, at Washington, D.C., this
[Day] day of [Month], 19[Year].
[Signature]
[Title]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand
and the seal of the Department of State.

Secretary of State

THE STATE OF [State] do hereby certify that
[Name] is a citizen of the State of [State].
Given under my hand and the seal of the
Department of State, at [City], this
[Day] day of [Month], 19[Year].
[Signature]
[Title]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand
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THE STATE OF [State] do hereby certify that
[Name] is a citizen of the State of [State].
Given under my hand and the seal of the
Department of State, at [City], this
[Day] day of [Month], 19[Year].
[Signature]
[Title]

9. Significance of January thaws.

Thaws come, too, in January, when the melting snow and ice become freshets, covering fields and meadows with a tide to carry away accumulated masses of winter. The thaw is reflected in the life of man. The time comes when the January mood is broken with cracking of ice and the breaking loose of the dams. Then, thought, which has been frozen up within us, like ice in winter, suddenly gushes forth in expression and feeling. Such thaws carry away accumulated ice. In this way, summer comes to our thoughts, and like blossoms which will not expand until summer comes, our thoughts lie hidden and unexpressed until the thaw comes to them, and causes them to burst forth into life.

The poet would mingle with the melting snow, in order to feel the throb of nature in his soul. To him, the snow is nature's life-blood.

"I saw the civil sun drying earth's tears,
Her tears of joy that only faster overflowed.

Fain would I stretch me by the highway side
To thaw and trickle with the melting snow,
That mingled soul and body, with the tide,
I, too, may through the pores of nature flow."¹

Even the cold of winter is superficial. In mid-winter, there are always some warm springy swamps to be found, where plants put forth their perennial leaves, and some hardier birds

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Winter, p. 156

make their homes. In winter warmth stands for all virtues. The warmth of the winter sun is not reflected warmth, it comes directly from the sun. Further, there is a subterranean fire in nature which never goes out and which no cold can chill. It is this subterranean fire which burns in the breast of man. Even on the coldest day man cherishes this fire within him. It is warmer than a fire actually kindled on a hearth.

The warmth of the sun calls forth reminiscences of summer. We think of flowing streams, trickling waters, growing plants and blossoming flowers.

"What fire could ever equal the sunshine of a winter's day, when the meadow mice come out by the wallsides, and the chickadee lisps in the defiles of the woods?"¹

With perennial summer, there resides in winter immortal youth.

"Its head is not silvered, its cheek is not blanched, but it has a ruby tinge in it."²

Thus the winter of discontent, which man sometimes permits to overtake him, never comes to nature, for she is always young.

10. The season of man's harvest.

"Winter was made to concentrate and harden and mature the kernel of his brain, to give tone and firmness and consistency to his thought."³

1. Marble, A. R., Thoreau Calendar, p. 76

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 416

3. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 190

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Thus thought the philosopher.

This season is the great harvest of man's thought. There is that peculiar inward quality in winter which makes a man pause and take stock. "A man is constrained to sit down and think," by this quality of the season. Man is made partially a prisoner by the snows of winter, and remains chiefly indoors. Here he must content himself with his own thoughts. What better time for stock-taking? When the temperature is low, thought moves silently but swiftly along, like a river moving under ice. Thus, our thoughts at this season are hardy, brave and mature, like the season in which they flourish.

D. SPRING

1. Season of hope and promise.

"The flower opens, and lo! another year, " reads an inscription on the catacombs in Thebes in Egypt. To Thoreau, there was something sublime in the fact that one of the oldest sentences in the world should celebrate the arrival of spring. Flowers open time and again, and at each opening a new year begins. Spring, full of hope and promise, ever a fresh phenomenon, is as old as time.

Every season seems best to us in its turn. Winter, with its crystalline beauty, colorful summer and her fragrance of growing things, gorgeous autumn and its significance, each holds its place in the heart of man. As each of the other seasons seems perfect in its place, so the coming of spring, with its living, growing, pulsing life, is like the "creation of cosmos out of Chaos and the realization of the Golden Age." Spring, the season of great hope and promise, has arrived.

2. Evidences of spring's approach.

Weeks before the calendar marks the beginning of the season, there are evidences of spring everywhere.

"I am reminded of spring by the quality of the air."¹

"The brightening of the willows or of osiers, that is a season in the spring, showing that the dormant sap is awakening."²

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Walden, p. 483

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 1

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"I heard this A.M. a nuthatch in the elms on the street. I think they are heard oftener at the approach of spring, just as the phebe note of the chickadee is, and so their quah, quah is a herald of spring."¹

The leaves of the yellow lily appear, the skunk cabbage is in evidence, though its leaves are not yet unfurled. The maple swamps take on a reddish tinge, the geese fly cackling overhead, the green leaves of the cowslip appear, and the mayflower shows its bud.

Moving silently, spring steps quietly forth from winter and advances before man is aware that winter is over. The sun begins to exert its spring warmth, and its influence is clearly seen in the rapidly melting ice and snow. Water is victor, and takes its place as ruler over snow and ice. The increasing warmth of the sun, not only causes the rapid melting of the upper surface of the ice, but penetrates through a foot or more of it, warming the water and thus melting the under side of the ice, too. With a crack and a boom, the ice, honeycombed, breaks up, and suddenly in a spring rain disappears completely. Water, held prisoner so long in winter's icy hands, rushes joyfully forth, the conqueror.

The snow disappears from the ground, the water trickling down in shining streams. The bright mosses are disclosed. Withered vegetation, blanketed through the winter by the snow, has been waiting for spring, and with the disappearance of the

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 2

snows, there appear such plants as the life-everlasting, golden-rods, pinweeds, wild grasses, cat-tails, mulleins, meadow-sweet, and the johnswort.

"In the dry pastures under the Cliff Hill, the radical leaves of the Johnswort are now revealed everywhere in the pretty radiating wreaths flat on the ground."¹

In some places, the green grasses can be seen, and in others the skunk cabbage is ready to blossom even before the snow has left the ground.

3. Signs of the arrival of spring.

What is the earliest sign of spring? Thoreau attempted to answer the question in his diary.

"Minott thinks, and quotes some old worthy as authority for saying, that the back of the striped squirrel is one of the first sure signs of decided spring weather."²

Thoreau himself found what he considered some of the earliest evidences of the arrival of the spring season.

"The tapping of the woodpecker, rat-tat-tat, knocking at the door of some sluggish grub, to tell him that spring has arrived."³

"The bluebird on the apple-tree, warbling so innocently, to inquire if any of its mates are within call, -- the angel of spring."⁴

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 61

2. Ibid., p. 95

3. Ibid., p. 202

4. Ibid., p. 111

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"The earliest of such signs in vegetation, noticed thus far, are the maple sap, the willow catkins and those of the poplar (not examined early), the celandine (?) grass on south banks, and perhaps cowslips in sheltered places, alder catkins loosened."¹

"What was that sound that came on the softened air? It was the warble of the first bluebird from that scraggy apple orchard yonder. When this is heard then spring has arrived."²

Another sign of the approach of spring is the disappearance of the frost from the ground. Before the greenness of spring is created, the frost leaves the ground, and this process is compared by Thoreau to a purgative action cleansing nature of winter fumes and indigestion.

""There is nothing inorganic. These foliaceous heaps lie along the bank like the slag of furnace, showing that Nature is 'in full blast' within. The earth is not a mere fragment of dead history, stratum upon stratum like the leaves of a book, to be studied by geologists and antiquaries chiefly, but living poetry like the leaves of a tree, which precede flowers and fruit, not a fossil earth, but a living earth; compared with whose great central life all animal and vegetable life is parasitic."³

One of the chief phenomena of spring is the softening of the air. A thin vapor seems to coat every object, and it is especially noticeable in the woods on the pine and oak. It is probably caused by a warm sun on a clear day following upon

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 226

2. Ibid., p. 791

3. Thoreau, Henry D., Walden, p. 476

snow and ice, and producing evaporation; looking through the transparent vapor, all things take on a more vivid appearance.

Another phenomenon of the season is the clear and placid water of the open rivers. "Winter could not show us this." The river channel is now completely free, has escaped from its winter quarters. The surface is as smooth as a liquid mirror, and has the appearance of a silver river. The river and its bursting of icy fetters, followed by a still, calm beauty, gave to Thoreau some of his finest spring thoughts. The silvery sparkle gives the river a celestial quality, and it is at such a time that Thoreau exclaimed:

"If rivers come out of their prison thus bright and immortal, shall not I too resume my spring life with joy and hope? Have I no hopes to sparkle on the surface of life's current? It is worthwhile to have our faith revived by seeing where a river swells and eddies about a half buried rock."¹

"How fitly and exactly any season of the year may be described by indicating the condition of some flower."²

So, in the early days of spring, the naturalist recorded the blossoming of the first flowers of the season. He noticed the greenness of the buds of the shad-blossoms, the opening of the crimson hazel, the full bloom of the white maple and the aspen.

Thoreau describes other phenomena of early spring in his diary of March 22, 1860.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 18
2. Ibid., p. 213

"Some of the phenomena of an average March are increasing warmth, melting the snow and ice, and gradually, the frost in the ground; cold and blustering weather, with high, commonly northeast winds for many days together; mist and other rains taking out frosts, whitenings of snow, and winter often back again, both its cold and snow; bare ground and open waters, and more or less of a freshet, some calm and pleasant days reminding us of summer, with a blue haze or a thicker mist over the woods at last, in which, perchance, we take off our coats awhile, and sit without a fire; the ways getting settled, and some greenness appearing on south banks; April-like rains after the frost is chiefly out; ploughing and planting of peas, etc., just beginning, and the old leaves getting dry in the woods."¹

4. A spring morning.

A spring morning and evening possess qualities which are peculiar to this season. In the morning, the sun on the water clearly reflects the hills and clouds. Notes of the birds, robins, sparrows, red-wings, bluebirds and larks, fill the air, as if the whole earth had burst into song. There is no danger of over-sleeping these mornings, with their early sunlight. The clouds are white and watery, not the clouds of winter. A slight breeze ripples the placidity of the waters.

5. A spring evening.

In the still evening hours, the insects fill the air, the blackbirds sing, the bluebird warbles. The light of the setting sun lights up the distant hills, and evening shades fall across the hills. The catkins of willow are silvery in the evening light. On the stillness of the air is borne the sound of

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 210

fish leaping in the waters, and the lowing of cattle, frogs peeping thinly. The shades of evening fall rapidly.

6. Rain.

"The spring has its windy March to usher it in, with many soaking rains reaching into April." ¹

Like the snow, the rain has its duty to perform in the life of nature.

"I hear the unspeakable rain mingled with rattling snow against the window, preparing the ground for spring." ¹

Rain in spring need not interfere with one's pleasures. We find such records in Thoreau's writings, to prove that no inclement weather interrupted his pursuit of the study of nature.

"In rain to Ministerial Swamp....." ²

"Pray what things interest me at present? A long soaking rain, the drops trickling down the stubble, while I lay drenched on a last year's bed of wild oats by the side of a bare hill, ruminating. These things are of moment. To watch the crystal globe just sent from heaven to associate with me. While these clouds and this sombre drizzling weather shut all in, we two draw nearer and know one another." ³

Again he recorded,

"Rain, rain. To Clematis Brook via Lee's Bridge;... A warm dripping rain heard on one's umbrella as on

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 285
2. Ibid., p. 124
3. Ibid., p. 275

a snug roof, and on the leaves without, suggests comfort. We go abroad with a slow but sure contentment, like turtles under their shells,... We walk under the clouds and mists as under a roof. Now we seem to hear the ground a-soaking up the rain, which does not fall ineffectually as on a frozen surface. We two are penetrated and revived by it..... How the thirsty grass rejoices."¹

Rain has a distinct effect on man. It provides him with a solitude otherwise not possible, and in his solitude he walks contentedly and thinks thoughts altogether foreign to any other kind of weather. Thoreau tells us that some of his pleasantest hours were during the heavy rains of spring.

"A rainy day is to the walker in solitude and retirement like the night. Few travelers are about, and they half hidden under umbrellas and confined to the highways. The thoughts run in a different channel from usual."²

7. Spring sounds.

Wrote Thoreau early one spring,

"I thank God for sounds. Nature indicates her sound state by a certain sonorousness, as the hum of insects, the cracking of ice, the singing of birds, the crowing of the cock early in the morning, and the barking of a dog at night."³

8. Spring thoughts.

Spring, to Thoreau, had a similar effect on man and nature.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Early Spring in Massachusetts, p. 317
2. Ibid., p. 320
3. Ibid., p. 48

"They were pleasant spring days, in which the winter of a man's discontent was thawing as well as the earth and the life had laid torpid began to stretch itself." ¹

As man grows older he does not rejoice with spring. He becomes indifferent to the succession of the years, and they slip by uneventfully, as rapidly as months.

Why should man be in such desperate haste? The buds of the trees swell slowly and imperceptibly, as if the spring days were an eternity. Nothing less than eternity is allotted to man. Let him, then, take time to do even the most trivial act, nature being his model.

E. SUMMER

1. A season of growth.

"It is now the season of growth,"¹ wrote Thoreau, early in the summer of 1853. To him, summer represented the growth of all things in nature, a process which has its beginning in spring and its fulfilment in autumn. As a naturalist and a nature lover, he devoted himself earnestly in this season, especially to the study of birds, plants, animals, and to all forms of life in nature.

2. Characteristics.

Like the other seasons, summer has its individual characteristics which distinguish it from any other season. It begins

".....when the hoariness disappears from the forest as you look down on it, and gives place thus to smooth green, full and universal."²

"The first of June when the lady's slipper and the wild pink have come out in the sunny places on the hillsides, then the summer is begun according to the clock of the seasons."³

"When the frogs dream, and the grass waves, and the buttercups toss their heads, and the heat disposes one to bathe in the ponds and streams, then is summer begun."⁴

"It appears to me that the following phenomena occur simultaneously, say June 12, viz., Heat about 85° at

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 2
2. Ibid., p. 20
3. Ibid., p. 43
4. Ibid., p. 70

2 p.m. True summer.

Hylodes cease to peep.
Purring frogs cease.
Lightening bugs first seen.
Bull-frogs trump generally.
Afternoon showers almost regular.
Turtles fairly and generally begin to lay."¹

Though some differences and phenomena of the various seasons can be easily recognized, yet, other differences between one season and that which precedes or follows it, are subtle. Thus in distinguishing between spring and summer, Thoreau wrote,

"Maybe the huckleberry bird best expresses the season, or the red-eye. What subtle differences between one season and another."²

3. Fragrance of summer.

Summer is the season of the fragrance of growing, living nature. The meadow, the forests, flowers, fruits, and swamps all emit their own fragrances. One notes among the various fragrances in the air, the scent of the forest and the sweetness of the meadow.

"Oh, those fugacious universal fragrances of the meadows and the woods."³

"What a sweetness fills the air now in the grounds or meadows."³

"It is as if all meadows were filled with some sweet mint."⁴

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 160

2. Ibid., p. 185

3. Ibid., p. 100

4. Ibid., p. 122

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There is the strong scent of ferns, the acid but agreeable scent of the blueberry bush in bloom, the sweet fragrance of the swamp pink, and the fir balsam, the sweetness of the locust and the lily, and the fragrance of blackberries and sweetbriar. There is, at times, a fragrance of the smell of earth, a singularly sweet scent on the heavy air. The atmosphere is saturated with the spicy sweetness and condensed fragrance of plants.

Yet all things in nature are not both beautiful and fragrant, for "Nature imitates all things in flowers."¹ In them are the beautiful and the ugly, the fragrant, and that offensive to the nostrils. In the wild rose, beauty and fragrance are combined.

"The beauty and fragrance of the wild-rose are wholly agreeable and wholesome, and wear well."²

In a field of clover there is another combination of the lovely and the fragrant.

"The clover is now in its glory, whole fields are rosed with it, mixed with sorrel, and looking deeper than it is. It makes fields look luxuriant which are really thinly clad. The air is full of its fragrance."²

4. Knowledge of flowers.

As a naturalist, Thoreau belonged to the finer class. He studied each plant and flower as a whole. He did not gather

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 218

2. Ibid., p. 184

blossoms to tear them to pieces in order to see the various parts, but rather to watch them grow and blossom into beauty. It was his delight to discover the homes of various flowers and to find the first blooms of the season. He learned the names of hundreds of flowers, trees and various plants.

"The blue flag, *Iris versicolor* enlivens the meadow..... What I suppose is the aster, ... the fresh shoots of the fir balsm *Abies balsamifera* found under the tree wilted."¹

"*Rhododendron lapponicum*, some time out of bloom, ... *Arctostaphylos alpina* going to seed.... *Polygonum viviparum* in prime according to Durand ... *Salix herbacea* ... a pretty, trailing, roundish-leaved willow going to seed."²

He knew when the various flowers were in bloom and when fruits were ripe.

"Today the milk-weed blossoming. Some of the raspberries are ripe..... Cherries too are ripe."³

He carefully followed and recorded the growth and expansion of the trees.

"I found the white pine tops full of staminate blossom buds, not yet fully grown or expanded, with a rich red tint, like a tree full of fruit, but I could find no pistillate blossom."⁴

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 266
 2. Ibid., p. 303
 3. Ibid., p. 277
 4. Ibid., p. 70

One of the finest influences of nature is the wild flower. There is no reason why a man should gather nature's fruits and entirely neglect her flowers. Wild flowers should be gathered and placed on a table in every house, a symbol of the season. No house can be said to be furnished without the presence of flowers.

5. Value of trees.

The trees, with the first expansion of the leaves, furnish a most valuable shade. The birds safely build their nests and conceal themselves in the cool shade of the leaves. The broad branches, heavily coated with leaves, furnish a covert for animals of many kinds. So oppressive heat brings refreshing shade.

6. Acquaintance with birds.

Thoreau studied and made friends not only with the flowers of summer, but also with the birds. They were a constant source of delight and interest to him. He knew the mating and breeding seasons of many varieties of birds, their songs, their colors; and peculiar markings and distinctive habits were all noted by him. Concerning nests and their construction, he wrote,

"How well suited the lining of a bird's nest not only to the comfort of the young, but to keep the eggs from breaking, fine elastic grass stems or root fibres, pine needles, hair and the like. These tender and brittle things, which you can hardly carry in cotton, lie there without harm."¹

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 57

He knew the breeding season of many birds, among them the blackbird.

"I have heard no musical gurgle-ee from black-birds for a fortnight. They are now busy breeding." ¹

When the eggs were being hatched, he knew it and could write,

"..... and birds are being hatched."²

Careful observations of the actions and growth of the young birds resulted in such descriptions as follows:

"Saw young bluebirds full grown yesterday, but with feeble note and dull colors. I observe that young birds are usually of a duller color and more speckled than old ones, as if for their protection in their tender state. They have not yet the markings, and beauty which distinguish their species, and which betray it often, but by their color are merged in the variety of colors of the season."³

In recording his discoveries concerning the night-hawk, the writer again shows a keen interest in the protection given to the birds by nature.

"Was ever bird more completely protected, both by the color of its eggs, and of its own body that sits on them, and of the bird just hatched? Accordingly, the eggs and young are rarely discovered."⁴

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 66
 2. Ibid., p. 2
 3. Ibid., p. 230
 4. Ibid., p. 165

His acquaintanceship with his feathered friends was close enough to permit him to see them near at hand. His descriptions are brief but vivid. The cherry bird, we are told, is a handsome bird with crest and chestnut-colored breast. Thoreau recorded his sight of a rare and beautiful bird,

".....with black above and white spots and bars, a large triangular blood-red spot on breast, and sides of breast and beneath white. Note, a warble like the oriole, but softer and sweeter. Probably a rose-breasted grosbeak..... I see in the cultivated ground, a lark, flashing his white tail, and showing his handsome yellow breast with its black crescent, like an Indian locket." ¹

"One of the night hawk's eggs is hatched. The young is unlike any that I have seen, exactly like a bunch of rabbit's fur, or down of that color, dropped on the ground, not two inches long, with a dimpling, somewhat irregular arrangement of minute feathers in the middle destined to become the wings and tail." ²

Easily the naturalist recognized the notes of a great variety of summer songsters. Among others he noted the morning song of the robin, the twitter of the goldfinch, the liquid strains of the bobolink, the springy note of the cherry bird, the unmatched melody of the wood-thrush, the chirping of the chip-birds, the cascade of the lark's song.

7. Significant summer sounds.

"A summer sound
Is a summer round."³

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 175
 2. Ibid., p. 165
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 112

"The note of the cherry bird is fine and ringing,
but peculiar and noticeable....."¹

"For a week past, I have heard the cool, watery
note of the goldfinch from time to time as it
twittered past."²

He records the sound of the red-wing's phe-pee-e;
the strangely foreign clucking sound of the whippoorwill,

".....like a hewer at work elsewhere."³

To Thoreau each bird song had not only a certain
quality of sound, but a sequence as well.

"In the pewee's note there is some sultriness,
but in the thrush's, though heard at noon,
there is the liquid coolness of things drawn
from the bottom of the spring. The thrush's
alone declares the immortal wealth and vigor
that is in the forest. Here is a bird in
whose strain the story is told."⁴

"The note of the wood-thrush answers to some
cool, unexhausted vigor in the hearer."⁵

"I hear the night-warbler breaking out as in his
dreams, made so from the first for some mysterious
reason..... The whippoorwill suggests how wide
asunder are the woods and the town. Its note
is very rarely heard by those who live on the
street, and then it is thought to be an ill omen."⁶

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 160
 2. Ibid., p. 150
 3. Ibid., p. 132
 4. Ibid., p. 331
 5. Ibid., p. 112
 6. Thoreau, Henry D., Poems of Nature, p. 72

"Upon the lofty elm-tree sprays
The vireo sings the changes sweet,
During the trivial summer days,
Striving to lift our thoughts above the streets."¹

"I explore, too, with pleasure, the sources of
the myriad sounds of the summer noon, and which
seem the very grain and stuff of which eternity
is made."²

Summer is the season in which we bring our philosophy out-of-doors. Our thoughts would rest gently on the sea of summer sound.

"Now first we begin to be peripatetics."³ In May and June the woodland choir is in full tune and "given the immense space and the human ear, one does not see how the void could be better filled."³ The song of the birds, the crickets and locusts, filled the summer day with sounds for which Thoreau was so thankful. In the medley of songs, he could

".....hear the note of the bobolinks concealed
in the top of an apple tree."⁴

8. Summer habits of nature's children.

Nature will bear the closest inspection, and actually issues an invitation to man to look at the smallest leaf. Thoreau accepted the invitation and found every part of nature full of vivid, interesting life. As a result of his close observations and inspections, he discovered, and remarked upon,

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Poems of Nature, p. 72
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 132
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 40
 4. Ibid., p. 7

many habits of birds and animals. Hours of pleasure and profit were passed in studying the habits of nature's children.

"Glowing indigo. It flits from the top of one tree to another, chirping as if anxious. Wilson says it sings, not like most other birds in the morning and evening chiefly, but also in the middle of the day. In this I notice it is like the tanager, and the other fiery plumaged birds. They seem to love the heat."¹

Concerning the vireo it is said that

"They always desert their nest when there are two cow-bird's eggs laid in it."²

The naturalist noted that the blackbirds live largely in streams and meadows, and are not dependent on the orchards and the woods for their homes, as most birds are.

In speaking of the red-bird, he said,

"When you approach (a nest) away dashes the mother, betraying her nest, and then chatters her anxiety from a neighboring bush, where she is soon joined by the red-shouldered male, who comes scolding over your head, chattering and uttering a sharp phe-phee-e."³

About the nesting habits of the bobolink, he wrote,

"Young bobolinks now fluttering over the meadows, but I have not been able to find a nest, so concealed are they in the meadow grass."⁴

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 87

2. Ibid., p. 115

3. Ibid., p. 8

4. Ibid., p. 282

Young hawks, contrary to the custom of most birds, keep a remarkable silence while in the nest, in order not to betray themselves, "nor will the old bird go to the nest while you are in sight."¹

He investigated the nests and homes of fish, learned their color and markings and their varied habits. He was impressed by nature's attempt to protect the children of the water as well as those of the land.

"Pouts make their nests in shallow mud-holes or bays in mosses of weedy mud or probably in the muddy bank, and the old pout hovers over the spawn or keeps guard at the entrance."²

"The young pout, just hatched, all head, light colored, under a mass of weedy hummocks which is all under water..... I see a pickerel in the brook, showing his whitish, greedy upper lip projecting over the lower. How well concealed he is. He is generally the color of the muddy bottom, or the decayed leaves and wood that compose it..... He heads up stream and keeps his body perfectly motionless, however rapid the current, chiefly by the motions of his narrow pectoral fins, though also by the waving of his other fins and tail as much as is necessary, a motion which a frog might mistake for that of weeds. Thus concealed by his color and stillness, like a stake, he lies in wait for frogs and minnows."³

A painted tortoise was laying eggs a few feet from the Marlborough road. Thoreau watched and recorded in his diary that

"she had excavated a hollow about five inches wide and six long in the moistened sand. Cautiously, with long intervals, she continued her work, resting always

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 114

2. Ibid., p. 68

3. Ibid., p. 136

her forefeet on the same spot and now looking around, her eye shut all but a narrow slit."¹

He noted the large bullfrogs, imperturbable and lazy, watching the frenzied attempts of a dog to reach them. About the squirrel, he wrote,

"See young and weak stupid squirrels now-a-days with slender tails, asleep on horizontal boughs above their holes, or moving feebly about. Might catch them."²

9. Summer thoughts.

The voice of the cricket on the summer air caused Thoreau to moralize. To him the cricket looked through summer to autumn, and made the summer work frivolous and vain.

"This singer has antedated autumn. His strain is superior to the seasons. It annihilates time and space. Summer, after all, is for time-servers."³

The glorious spring, full of hope and promise, conveying glimpses of heaven to man, passes quickly on into summer, the season of small fruits. We see, now, the great space between our hopes and their fulfilment, and are a little sad at the revelation.

"The prospect of heaven is taken away and we are presented with only a few small berries."³

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Summer, p. 91

2. Ibid., p. 160

3. Ibid., p. 168

The philosopher would develop and flourish with nature, avoiding the waste of precious moments, producing ripe fruit in the mature season, matching each mood of nature.

"Oh, if I could so live that there should be no desultory moment in all my life! that in the trivial season, when small fruits are ripe, my fruits might be ripe also! that I could match nature always with my moods! that in each season, when some part of nature especially flourishes, then a corresponding part of me may not fail to flourish."¹

1. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 77

F. AUTUMN

1. The poet's view of autumn.

The poet wrote of autumn,

"I am the autumnal sun,
With autumn gale my race is run;
When will the hazel put forth its flowers,
Or the grapes ripen under my bowers?
When will the harvest or the hunter's moon,
Turn my midnight into mid-noon?
I am all sere and yellow,
And to my core yellow,
The mast is dropping within my woods,
The winter is lurking within my moods,
And the rustling of the withered leaf,
Is the constant music of my grief."¹

2. The brilliancy of the season.

"The brilliancy of autumn is wonderful...."²

To no other season does Thoreau attribute the brilliance and gorgeousness belong exclusively to autumn. This is the season of startling, bright hues, soft, glowing tints; a season of reds and yellows; of painted foliage, and sparkling, flashing atmosphere.

".....this flashing brilliancy, as if the atmosphere were phosphoric..... Certainly these are the most brilliant days in the year, ushered in perhaps by a frosty morning, as this...."²

The poet wrote of the autumnal coloring of trees and skies, and felt within him the light and brilliance of the

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Nature Poems, p. 76

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 248

sparkling air.

"What is it gilds the trees and clouds,
And paints the heavens so gay,
But yonder fast abiding light
With its unchanging ray?

I've felt within my inmost soul
Such cheerful morning news,
In the horizon of my mind
I've seen such morning hues.

As in the twilight of the dawn
When the first birds awake,
I heard within the silent wood
When they the small twigs break;

As in the eastern skies is seen
Before the sun appears,
Foretelling of the summer heat
Which far away he hears."¹

3. Autumnal tints.

The splendid brilliance of autumn, the glory of autumnal hues and tints, resides magnificently in the foliage. The gorgeous coloring of the leaves is of indescribable splendor, and marks autumn as the season of the "painted leaves",² and glowing color. Such a vast supply of natural hues as cannot be found elsewhere, gaily adorn this season, and should be a source of invaluable aid to man.

"What School of Design can vie with this? Think how much the eyes of painters of all kinds, and of manufacturers of cloth and paper, and paper stainers, and countless others, are to be educated by these autumnal colors. The stationer's envelopes may be of various tints, yet not

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 93

2. Ibid., p. 97

so various as those of the leaves of a single tree. If you want a different shade or tint of a particular color, you have only to look farther within or without the tree or the wood. These leaves are not many dipped in one dye, as at the dye-house, but they are dyed in light of infinitely various degrees of strength, and left to set and dry there."¹

"So vivacious is redness..... It is the color of colors." ²

The predominating colors of the season are red and yellow, and their various tints and hues.

"Blue is reserved to be the color of the sky, but yellow and red are the colors of the earth flowers."³

Recording the date on which the scarlet oak was in its prime, the naturalist wrote,

"They have been kindling their fires for a week past, and now generally burst into a blaze..... Every tree of this species which is visible in those directions, even to the horizon, now stands out definitely red. Some great ones lift their red backs high above the woods, in the next town, like huge roses with a myriad of fine petals.... Theirs is an intense, burning red, which would lose some of its strength, methinks, with every step you might take toward them; for the shade that lurks amid their foliage does not report itself at this distance and they are unanimously red. The focus of their reflected color is in the atmosphere far on this side. Every such tree becomes a nucleus of red, as it were, where, with the declining sun, that color grows and glows.

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 335
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 349
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., The Heart of Thoreau's Journal, p. 307

The very rails reflect a rosy light at this hour¹
and season. You see a redder tree than exists."

Contrasting colors add to the rather startling effect
produced by the unusual brilliance.

"I now see one small red maple which is all a pure
yellow within, and a bright red or scarlet on its
outer surface and prominences. It is a
remarkably beautiful contrast of scarlet and
yellow. Another is yellow and green, where this
was scarlet and yellow, and in this case, the
bright liquid green, now getting to be rare, is
by contrast as charming a color as the scarlet."²

"Blueberry bushes, now blood-red full of white
blossoms, as in spring. The blossoms of spring
contrast strangely with the leaves of autumn."³

4. Exhilaration created by lavish display.

More important to him than the mere pleasure and delight
to the eye supplied by the carnival of colors, is the exhilaration
excited by the lavish display. The brilliant trees create a
festival equal to any annual fair, but it is free, and open to
everyone, even to the poorest.

"These on the cheap and innocent gala-days,
celebrated by one and all without the aid of
Committees of marshals, such a show as may be
safely licensed, not attracting gamblers or
rum-sellers, not requiring any special police
to keep the peace..... The October festival
costs no powder, nor ringing of bells, but
every tree is a living liberty-pole on which
a thousand bright flags are waving,.....

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 349
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 89
 3. Ibid., p. 118

January 1914

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nature herself holds her annual fair in October, not only in the streets, but in every hollow and on every hill."¹

Does not all this colorful display excite man's fancy and suggest that his "spirits should rise as high as Nature's,-- should hang out their flag, and the routine of his life be interrupted by an analagous expression of joy and hilarity?"²

5. Source of nature's paintbox.

With the interest of not only the artist and philosopher, but possessing also the mind of the naturalist, Thoreau sought the source of Nature's autumn paint-box of colors.

"I suspect that I know on what the brilliancy of the autumn leaves will depend. On the greater or less draught of summer."³

A severe draught drains the leaves of their vitality, leaving them dull and lifeless. The tree decked in a brilliant dress abounds in sap and vigor, due to the abundant rains of the preceding season.

"October is the month of painted leaves. Their rich glow now flashes around the world.so the year near its setting. October is its sunset sky, November the later twilight."⁴

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 336

2. Ibid., p. 338

3. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 16

4. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 307

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6. Color the symbol of ripeness.

Color stands for all ripeness and success. To Thoreau the beautiful tints of autumn typify maturity. Fruit, when it has ripened, acquires a bright tint.

"I think the change to some higher color in a leaf is an evidence that it has arrived at a late, more perfect, and final maturity, answering to the maturity of fruits, and not to that of green leaves, etc; which merely serve a purpose."¹

So also, the leaves, upon attaining the fulness of growth, color, and fall. The sky at sunset displays the colors of maturity, the maturity of the day. Near its setting the year, too, grows colorful. Thus, autumn, symbolical of the ripeness of the year, is the season of the brilliant tints of maturity. Autumn is the ripened year.

"A great many, who have spent their lives in cities, and have never chanced to come into the country at this season, have never seen this, the flower, or rather, the ripe fruit, of the year."²

7. Philosopher's thoughts concerning ripeness.

The philosopher muses thus. As leaves, fruits, and man's crops ripen, should man, also, mature? As the autumn of his life approaches, he too should ripen and grow mellow.

"Their leaves are perfectly ripe. I wonder if there is any answering ripeness in the lives of men who live beneath them. It is with leaves,

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 259

2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 305

as with fruits, and woods, animals and men; when they are mature, their different characters appear."¹

"The word 'ripe' is thought by some to be derived from the verb, 'to reap', so that what is ripe is ready to reap. The fall of the leaf is preceded by a ripe old age."²

8. Period of maturity and harvest.

Autumn is not only a period of ripening and of maturity, but also the season of the harvest. Man gathers his crops, his beans, corn, and his winter supplies. Thoreau's harvest was of a different kind; he did not interfere with others, not did others get in his way. He harvested at all times of year, and gathered a crop at any time of year.

"If I go abroad over the land each day to get the best I can find, and that is never carted off, even to the last day of November."³

9. Fall of the leaf and its significance.

The brilliant leaves begin to fall after a rain or frost, but the "principal leaf-harvest, the acme of the Fall, is commonly about the sixteenth of October."³ The ripened leaf, like the mature fruit, provides a rich harvest. For beautiful variety, no crop can be compared with this one.

Their fall is not inglorious, and their remaining task a noble one.

1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 322
2. Ibid., p. 41
3. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 109

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"The ground is all parti-colored with them. But they still live in the soil, whose fertility and bulk they increase, and in the forests that spring from it, they stoop to rise, to mount higher in coming years, by subtle chemistry, climbing by the sap in the trees, and the sapling's first fruits thus shed, transmuted at last, may adorn its Crown, when, in after years, it has become the monarch of the forest."¹

Contented to die, decay, and afford nourishment for future generations, these myriads of leaves dance gaily to the grave. The philosopher watched them as they frisked daintily and lightly to their last resting place. Afterwards, walking through the crisp, rustling leaves, his thoughts took form and he exclaimed,

"They teach us how to die! One wonders if the time will ever come, when men, with their boasted faith in immortality, will lie down as gracefully and as ripe,- with such as Indian-summer serenity- will shed their bodies, as they do their hair and nails."²

The naturalist finds evidence of ripeness even in the bird world.

"The joy is the bird of October. It, too, with its bright color, stands for some ripeness in the bird-harvest....."³

10. November, the month of decay.

As September and October symbolize the season of

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 331
 2. Ibid., p. 331
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 205

maturity and harvest, so November, the "gray" month, is the month of decay. In Thoreau's Journal for October, there is written,

"These days you may say the year is ripened like a fruit by frost, and puts on brilliant tints of maturity, but not yet the color of decay. It is not sere and withered as in November."¹

The writer of the diary found as much tragedy in autumn as he did in the revolution of kingdom.

"If misery loves company, misery has company enough. Is there not tragedy enough in autumn?"²

It is during autumn that plants cease to grow for the winter season. Man, too, looking back to summer, and anticipating winter, senses the passing of the year.

"It is a season of withering; of dust and heat; a season of small fruits and trivial experiences."³

11. Tragedy of autumn.

The poet, in the crisp rustling of withered leaves, felt the tragedy and sorrow of the latter days of autumn, found winter edging its way stealthily into all his moods. He mourned over the loss of the glory of autumn, and grieved for its passing.

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 205
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 458
 3. Ibid., p. 458

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"Far in the woods, these golden days,
Some leaf obeys its Maker's call,
And through their hollow aisles it plays
With delicate touch the prelude of the Fall.

Gently withdrawing from its stem,
It lightly lays itself along,
Where the same hand hath pillowed them,
Resigned to sleep upon the old year's throng.

The loneliest birch is brown and sere,
The furthest pool is strewn with leaves,
Which float upon this watery bier,
Where is no eye that sees, no heart that grieves."¹

12. The "thoughtful days" for the philosopher.

To the philosopher, the autumn marks the beginning of the "thoughtful days." So numerous the glories and lessons of Nature that "we can walk anywhere with profit." Reflections are made purer and clearer by the sparkling, phosphoric atmosphere,

"... just as our mental reflections are more distinct at this season of the year."²

All thoughts are not of November's sombre hues. Bright, pleasant reflections of former seasons and color to later autumn's dull shades. Like the swamp pyrus which is open and confiding while other plants are reserved, "I, too, have my spring thoughts even in November."³

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Poems of Nature, "Fall of the Leaf", p. 78
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Cape Cod, p. 34
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 233

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13. Autumn a second spring.

The naturalist found in autumn a second spring. It was sometimes the flight of a bird and its song, at times the blossoming of a fall plant, or the growth of a nature plant, which reminded him of spring.

"Many phenomena remind me that now is to some extent a second spring, not only the new springing and blossoming of flowers, but the peeping of the hylodes for some time, and the faint warbling of their spring notes by many birds."¹

"With the autumn begins in some measure a new spring. The plover is heard whistling high in the air over the dry pastures, the finches flit from tree to tree, the bobolinks and flickers fly in flocks, and the goldfinch rides on the earliest blast, like a winged hyla peeping amid the rustle of the leaves."²

Even the "angel of spring" puts in an appearance.

"The air this morning is full of bluebirds, and again it is spring. There are many things to indicate the renewing of spring at this season, the blossoming of spring flowers, not to mention the witch-hazel, the notes of spring birds, the springing of grain and grass and other plants."³

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1. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 144
 2. Thoreau, Henry D., Excursions, p. 138
 3. Thoreau, Henry D., Autumn, p. 91

G. CONCLUSION

1. Familiarity with seasons.

Thoreau treated the seasons as a man treats his friend. He learned to know them in all their moods, and to adapt himself to the peculiarities and demands of each in turn. Seasonal phenomena became so familiar to him that they became a part of his life. The steady and rhythmic progress of the seasons was an ever recurring source of wonder to him. Each season without apparent effort and regardless of the action of man, appeared in its proper sequence. In this steady flow of the seasons, Thoreau found many a valuable lesson for man.

2. Interest centered in wild nature.

His interest in the seasons developed through his keen and sincere love for nature. The wild life of nature, in which his interest centered, is wholly dependent upon the changes of the seasons. To him, so closely allied were nature and the seasons that without a knowledge of the one, he could learn nothing of the other. The different forms of nature best expressed to him the changes of the seasons.

Love for every phase of nature and all seasonal phenomena developed within him. As a poet, naturalist and philosopher, he expressed his love for the rain, snow, ice, sunshine, and cloudy skies. He delighted in the birds and flowers of each season, every tree and plant aroused an enthusiastic response in him.

To him, nature and health were synonymous. It is only by living in nature that man can be the possessor of health. Society's creature is pale and wan, and cannot be compared to the child of nature with his glowing, forceful vitality. Each season is but a state of health in nature. To be well in any season a man must be well in the season.

3. Underlying purpose of each season.

Each season had, for Thoreau, its distinctive marks of beauty, and its own purpose. He enjoyed the glittering splendor of winter, the colorful brilliance of autumn, the new life of spring, and the glowing greenness of the growth and expansion of summer. No season lacks purpose or value. Each plays its own part in nature's scheme of things. Nothing is wasted, there is no superfluity. Nature makes each season perfect in its proper sequence. In the spring all forms of life in nature awaken and are endowed with new vitality. The summer is the time of growth, and is closely followed by the maturity and decay of autumn. Winter too, has a definite purpose, and nature rests under its blanket of snow and ice in preparation for new expansion.

4. Corresponding seasons in life of man.

Each season in nature has its corresponding season in the life of man. In the spring of the year, all nature is endowed with new life. It is a season of hope for the future. It corresponds to the early youth of man, and as it is the

The first of these is the fact that the United States is a young country, and that its history is a history of growth and expansion. The second is the fact that the United States is a country of many races and many languages, and that its history is a history of the struggle for unity and harmony. The third is the fact that the United States is a country of many religions, and that its history is a history of the struggle for religious freedom and tolerance.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The history of the United States is a history of growth and expansion. It is a history of the struggle for unity and harmony, and of the struggle for religious freedom and tolerance. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the individual, and of the struggle for the rights of the nation. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the people, and of the struggle for the rights of the world. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the future, and of the struggle for the rights of the past. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the present, and of the struggle for the rights of the future. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the people, and of the struggle for the rights of the nation. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the individual, and of the struggle for the rights of the world. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the future, and of the struggle for the rights of the past. It is a history of the struggle for the rights of the present, and of the struggle for the rights of the future.

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season for the sowing of the seed in nature, so should it be the seed-time of character for man. If he would reap a bountiful harvest, man must look to the spring.

The summer, a season of development, prepares nature for the harvest. It is the time of the ripening of small fruits. In the summer of his expansion, man should match his moods with those of nature, creating perfect harmony. Then he will flourish with nature, and when nature's small fruits are ripe, his also will be ready for the harvest.

Autumn, to Thoreau, meant the ripeness and maturity of all things in nature. The colors of this season were symbols of ripeness and success. If man is in perfect harmony with nature, he too, in the autumn of his life, will mellow and ripen. At this time of maturity, nature's children show their different characters, and the character of man displays itself. Autumn is also the season of harvest, and as man reaps the bounty of nature's crops, so he prepares to reap the harvest of thought, the seeds of which were planted in the springtime of life.

The winter with its snow and ice confines man to the warmth of his shelter, and compels him to seek entertainment within himself. The period of growing and harvesting are past, and nature prepares for a new spring. So man, in the winter of his life, finds himself forced to pause, and to cease from his travels and wanderings. Then the inwardness of the nature's winter takes possession, and thrown upon his own resources he

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finds that it is time to look within and take stock. Then he reaps the harvest of his thought, which took root in the spring, grew and developed through the summer, and matured in autumn.

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The first of the year was a very cold one, and the
winter was very severe. The snow was very deep,
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H. SUMMARY

Through a study of the writings of Henry David Thoreau, I have sought to discover his treatment of the seasons, as a poet, naturalist, and philosopher.

A., the introduction, contains a brief description of his parentage, and its apparent influence on his character. Then follows a summary of the events of his youth and early manhood, during which time he established an intimacy with nature. At this time he began his search for truth and its relation to man, in wild nature. There is, also, a description of Concord and its environs of which he was so fond, and which offered him all forms of wild nature.

Part B deals with the seasonal elements found in his writings, particularly in his Journal. It contains examples of the author's exactitude and minuteness of details in his daily records. The treatment of the Journal by its inheritor, H. G. O. Blake, is summarized.

This section emphasizes Thoreau's relationship with the seasons, as shown by his keen interest in the marked changes in nature, and in seasonal phenomena. How the seasons affect the growth and advancement of man is the next topic. The words of the philosopher are quoted in which he shows that every experience in nature is reflected in man's moods. The relationship between man and nature as established by the health-giving qualities of nature completes this section.

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Section C deals specifically with winter. It is introduced by the words of the poet as he described this season and its chief characteristics. Following this introductory poem there is a passage relating to the progress of the seasons, and the individual character of each season.

In the words of Thoreau are described the "solid beauty" of winter, the glory of the "mornings of creation", the wonders of a winter sunset, and the reflection of rainbow colors on the snow and ice. The sounds and the stillness of the season are differentiated from those of other seasons. The combination of beauty and usefulness is well typified by the snow and ice, and the value of snow and ice is explained. The remainder of this division relates especially to the philosopher's attitude toward winter. It includes references to the inwardness of the season with its compulsory moderation or abstinence, and the significance of the January thaws. A passage relating to the philosopher's belief in the inwardness of winter and its advantages for stock-taking, ends this part of the thesis.

D. This section opens with a brief description of the qualities of spring. A number of direct quotations follow this introduction, relative to the signs of the approach and arrival of spring. This part includes some of the phenomena of early spring as seen by Thoreau.

A brief description of a spring morning and evening is followed by a passage on rain and its influence on nature and

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man. A quotation from Thoreau's diary relating to spring sounds precedes the final discussion of this section. The latter includes the spring thoughts of the philosopher, who would have man use nature as his model in the performing of all acts, even the most trivial.

E. This division deals with Thoreau's attitude toward summer. Descriptions of a number of characteristics of summer as found in the Journal are quoted here, and are followed by a passage concerning the season's fragrance. Following, are several passages illustrating Thoreau's breadth of knowledge in the world of nature. This part includes numerous quotations showing Thoreau's knowledge of bird life and song, and the habits of a variety of wild life.

The cricket's chirp causes the philosopher to moralize, and he sees summer as a season of small fruit. The expression of his desire to flourish as nature flourishes completes this section.

Section F., containing Thoreau's attitude toward autumn, begins with the words of the poet. The first subject to be treated is the brilliance of the season, and this includes the poet's conception of the sparkling atmosphere.

The next few passages describe the glorious autumnal colors, the effect created by them, and the reason for their brilliance. The variety of tints, the predominating hues, and contrasting colors are described in the words of Thoreau. Nature's carnival of colors is compared to an annual fair with all the pleasures and delights of the latter but without its

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meanness and sordidness. Thoreau considered color the symbol of ripeness and success. Autumn should be the season of maturity not only for nature, but also for man. It is also a season of harvest. In the fall of the leaf the philosopher saw a significant lesson for man.

In later autumn the poet found tragedy, and a portion of his thought is quoted here. The last part contains several quotations from Thoreau the naturalist, in which he described autumn as a second spring, and offered evidences of spring which he saw in nature in this season.

Section G. concludes the thesis. In this final section I have discussed the relationship established by Thoreau between man and nature.

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MEMORANDUM

TO : THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

FROM : THE CHIEF OF STAFF

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

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